

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENTIAL/SECURITY INFORMATION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Department of Chemistry at the University of Latvia in Riga

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Most of the men who were professors at that time did not return to the University after 1945. [redacted] two [redacted] did return to the University. Dr. Augusts Kelans, [redacted] was a professor of inorganic chemistry. His research work was on new analytical methods of separation of phosphate from analytical group III by bismuth subnitrate (BiONO_3).

2. Dr. Gustavs Vanags [redacted] was a professor of organic chemistry. His research work was concerned with new analytical methods for identification of organic amines and enolization of organic compounds. [redacted]. The Soviet authorities forced him to return to Riga from East Germany in 1945.
3. The Department of Chemistry was located in a four story building, as shown in Enclosure "A". The primary duty of the department was the teaching of chemistry but its facilities were used by other engineering and science departments of the University. The divisions of ceramics, fuel technology, and analytical chemistry did official testing for the Government and private investigation for other institutions. The scientific glassware and practically all organic and inorganic chemicals used in the main laboratories (inorganic, two analytical organic and chemical engineering) were imported from Germany. During 1940-1941 chemicals were obtained from Soviet sources. The inorganic chemicals were all exceptionally poor quality. During the period of Soviet occupation the chemicals and glassware purchased in Germany prior to the occupation sufficed. The research facilities were small but quite satisfactory for use by independent research groups. The best equipped laboratory was the X-ray laboratory.
4. The division of organic chemistry was located on the fourth floor. It had two laboratories, each with 40 working places for students. There was a separate combustion room with gas-heated furnaces. The laboratory of the division head was located in the micro-analytical room. On the second floor was the laboratory for five graduate students who worked on combustion and nitrogen determination.

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5. Under the Soviet occupation the curriculum remained the same, with the addition of a political subject. Several Latvians who had gone to the USSR in 1919 or 1920, returned to Latvia to instruct in the political courses. All students were required to attend these classes and no excuses were accepted for failure to appear. The text book used was the "Short History of the Communist Party in the USSR". If any student failed this course, dismissal from the University was inevitable, and investigation of the student, his family and friends was sometimes carried out by the NKVD. Out of more than 100 students in my political class, only two or three failed. These were not stupid students but gave wrong answers deliberately for ideological reasons. If any student failed, the instructors were subject to criticism so the teachers made the questions easy on the examinations. The students considered the course a sad joke.
6. In 1940 there were approximately 6500 students in the University of Latvia in Riga. There were 600 students in the Department of Chemistry, which included chemical engineering and pharmacy. One third of the students in chemistry were female and one-half of the students in pharmacy were female.

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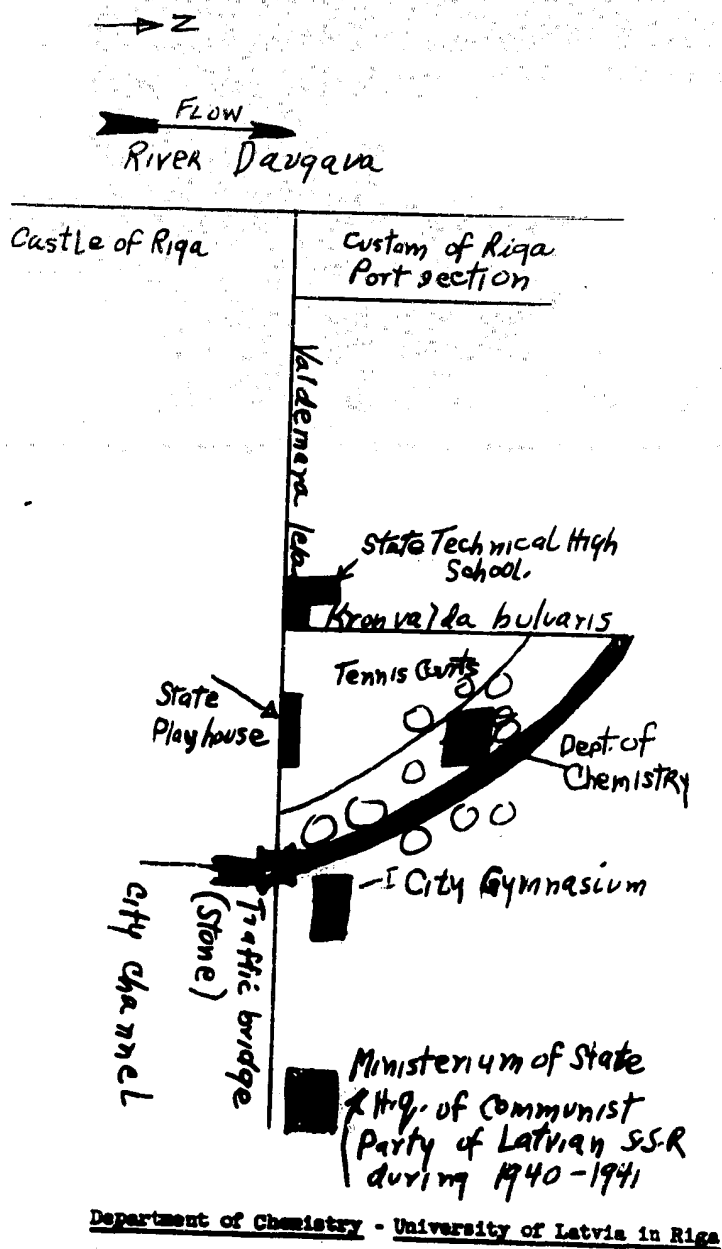
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ENCLOSURE "A"

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